**Verification of the Certificates given by Deputy 'Secretary to the Government of India**

7672. SHRI SANGH PRIYA GAUTAM: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether an applicant for issue of a new passport (for the first time) can attach a character certificate indicating residence of the applicant at the given address for two years given by a Deputy Secretary of the Government of India;

(b) whether it is a fact that passport office gets varacity of such a certificate through a sub-inspector/inspector of police CID branch of the state; if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) what are the reasons for which the truth of a certificate issued by official like Deputy Secretary to the Government of India is sought to be checked through very junior officer of the police like a sub-inspector/inspector;

(d) whether Government propose to drop the need of a certificate of Deputy Secretary if his certificate is not to be believed; and

(c) if not, the reasons for which Deputy Secretary is sought to be humiliated by getting his certificate verified through a low police official?

THE MINISTER OF STATTE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA): (a) A Verification Certificate for the purpose of passport applications may be got signed: by any of the following:

(i) A Deputy Secretary/Director/ Joint Secretary/Additional Secretary/ Secretary/Cabinet Secretary to the Government of India.

(ii) A Joint Secretary/Additional Secretary/Special Secretary/Secretary/ Chid' Secretary to a State Government.

(iii) A Sub-Divisional Magistrate/ Additional District Magistrate/District Magistrate of the district of residence of applicant.

(iv) A district Superintendent of Police/Range Deputy Inspector General of Police/Inspector General of Police/ Director General of Police of district of residence of applicant.

(b) to (e) The use of a Verification Certificate is optional. It is not a substitute for the normal process of police verification.

**Iranian Ambassador's Statement on Kashmir**

7673. SHRI K. R. MALKANI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be 'pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Ambassador in Iran has been asked to leave that country because of his statements on Kashmir;

(b) whether Government are aware of the statements made by the Iranian envoy in India after his trip to Kashmir; and

(c) whether Government have expressed its displeasure by asking the Iranian envoy to leave or whether it has protested to Tehran in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. dBHATIA):
(a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Government have seen press reports of the Iranian Ambassador's statements pertaining to his visit to J&K on 27-30 April, 1994 in a group of Envoys accredited to India.

Government have conveyed to the Government of Iran our disappointment in this matter.